

Coins

Auction, action at ANA show

By Roger Boye

AS MANY AS 15,000 coin collectors are expected to be in St. Louis starting next Sunday for the country's biggest 1979 coin show, the American Numismatic Association's 88th anniversary convention.

In addition to the many internationally recognized coin scholars and exhibitors who will attend, at least 280 prominent dealers will be on hand to buy and sell collector keepsakes during the five-day extravaganza.

Also, thousands of rare coins will be on the auction block during the show and in a special preconvention sale Thursday and Friday.

One of four firms conducting that special sale is the Rare Coin Co. of America in Chicago, which will auction off an exceedingly rare Brasher doubloon made in 1787. It is one of seven such doubloons in existence, and is expected to bring a bid of at least \$300,000.

During the convention, many valuable treasures also will be on exhibit, including one of five known 1913 Liberty nickels, a very rare 1804 silver dollar, and a collection of material from the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair.

The ANA's board of governors will meet during the convention, with several other national collector organizations. Results of the ANA's recent controversial elections also will be announced at the show.

Although convention visitors must register, admission is free to the dealer sales area and to the

exhibits at the Cervantes Convention and Exhibition Center. Show hours are from noon to 7 p.m. July 29 through Aug. 1, and from noon to 4 p.m. Aug. 2. The preconvention auction will be held at the Henry VIII Inn and Lodge in Bridgeton, Mo., a St. Louis suburb.

Persons planning to attend the convention from the Chicago area are advised to obtain hotel reservations before traveling to St. Louis.

THE CALIFORNIA "mystery man collector" who bought three of the country's rarest coins during the last year has been identified as multimillionaire Jerry Hatten Buss.

Buss' identity was revealed in a recent Sports Illustrated article, which also discussed, in part, how a corporation run by Buss purchased two Los Angeles professional sports teams and the 17,505-seat Los Angeles Forum.

Buss, 46, paid \$200,000 for one of 5 known 1913 Liberty nickels, and \$200,000 for an 1804 silver dollar. His latest acquisition, costing \$135,000, was one of 14 known 1894-S dimes.

The identity of the mystery man was the subject of much speculation in the hobby. Several experts were convinced the man was a prominent television personality, possibly Buddy Ebsen of the show "Barnaby Jones."

Ebsen later denied he was the man, saying, "Anyone who would pay \$200,000 for a nickel, or even a dollar, should be locked away for safekeeping."